



THE TEXAS LEGISLATURE
RIO GRANDE VALLEY DELEGATION

Senators:

April 21, 2020

The Honorable
Eddie Lucio, Jr.
District 27

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senator
517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable
Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa
District 20

Representatives:

The Honorable
Ryan Guillen
District 31

Dear Senator Cornyn,

The Honorable
Armando "Mando"
Martinez
District 39

The Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley has grown to be the 5th largest food bank in Texas and serves a food insecure population of 146,000 between Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties. Under normal circumstances, the Food Bank RGV feeds approximately 64,000 people a week through its partners, but since COVID-19 has impacted our communities, the demand has soared 195%, with that number increasing significantly each week. At the Food Bank RGV's emergency pantry alone, the facility is now feeding over 2,000 families.

The Honorable
Eddie Lucio III
District 38

The Food Bank RGV is becoming increasingly strained by the day and is in dire need of assistance to continue feeding the Rio Grande Valley's most vulnerable citizens without interruption. Several recent issues have compounded the problem for the Food Bank RGV: (1) their food demand has rapidly grown due to job loss and furloughing; (2) their normal supply lines have become less reliable for numerous reasons; (3) their operating expenses have increased 17%; (4) their corporate support has decreased 32%; (5) their volunteers have decreased 98%; (6) their food drives have been reduced by 100%; and (7) their costs have increased due to heightened health and safety requirements from the CDC and public health authorities.

The Honorable
Sergio Muñoz, Jr.
District 36

The Honorable
Bobby Guerra
District 41

The Honorable
Oscar Longoria
District 35

The Honorable
Terry Canales
District 40

As the delegation of the Rio Grande Valley, we request your urgent assistance in securing federal aid through whatever means necessary to help meet the escalating demands of the Food Bank RGV. We also request that the Food Bank RGV be supplied with the necessary personal protection equipment to safely handle and distribute food. This additional aid will allow the Food Bank to safely and rapidly meet their rising demand and to continue to distribute regularly thousands of pounds of canned foods, dry foods, and fresh produce to our rural and vulnerable populations. The aid will also help meet staff salaries that are absolutely essential to the COVID-19 response and transportation costs when necessary.

The Honorable
Alex Dominguez
District 37

Recently, we have also heard from the Texas Division of Emergency Management that Governor Greg Abbott has approved the request for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to procure food for Texas food banks. We send our thanks to Governor Abbott and Chief Nim Kidd for working closely on addressing this important issue. While we appreciate the work done so far, we continue to urge for additional federal assistance for the Food Bank RGV to address their urgent safety and financial needs.

Thank you for your immediate attention in addressing these important matters for the Rio Grande Valley. If you need further information, please do not hesitate to reach out.

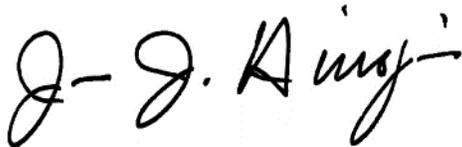
Sincerely,



Eddie Lucio, Jr.
State Senator, District 27



Eddie Lucio III
State Representative, District 38



Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa
State Senator, District 20



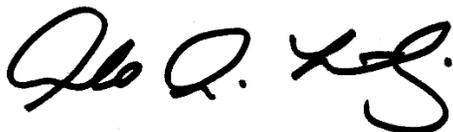
Sergio Muñoz, Jr.
State Representative, District 36



Ryan Guillen
State Representative, District 31



Bobby Guerra
State Representative, District 41



Armando "Mando" Martinez
State Representative, District 39



Oscar Longoria
State Representative, District 35





Terry Canales
State Representative, District 40



Alex Dominguez
State Representative, District 37

CC: Governor Greg Abbott
Nim Kidd, Chief of the Texas Department of Emergency Management

